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THE RISK OF NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Report of the First Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. Miloš KOTEREC (Slovakia)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The item entitled "The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East" was included in the provisional agenda of the fifty-second session of the General Assembly in accordance with Assembly resolution 51/48 of 10 December 1996.

2. At its 4th plenary meeting, on 19 September 1997, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include the item in its agenda and to allocate it to the First Committee.

3. At its 2nd meeting, on 9 October 1997, the First Committee decided to hold a general debate on all disarmament and international security items allocated to it, namely, items 62 to 82, which was held at the 3rd to 12th meetings, from 13 to 17 and from 20 to 24 October (see A/C.1/52/PV.3-12). Structured discussions of specific subjects on the adopted thematic approach were held at six informal meetings, from 27 to 31 October 1997. Draft resolutions on the items were considered at the 15th to 17th meetings, from 5 to 7 November (see A/C.1/52/PV.15-17); action was taken on them at the 18th to 24th meetings, from 10 to 14 and on 17 November (see A/C.1/52/PV.18-24).

4. For its consideration of the item, the Committee had before it the following documents:

(a) Report of the Secretary-General (A/52/454);

(b) Letter dated 1 October 1997 from the Permanent Representative of Colombia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the communiqué of the Meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs and Heads of

Delegation of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries to the Fifty-second session of the General Assembly, held in New York on 25 September 1997 (A/52/447-S/1997/775);

(c) Letter dated 23 October 1997 from the Permanent Representative of Indonesia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the final communiqué and annexes of the Annual Coordination Meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, held in New York on 2 October 1997 (A/52/529-S/1997/820).

II. CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTION A/C.1/52/L.5 AND Rev.1

5. On 28 October, the Committee had before it a draft resolution entitled "The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East", submitted by Egypt, on behalf of States Members of the United Nations that are members of the League of Arab States (A/C.1/52/L.5).

6. On 7 November, the sponsors submitted a revised draft resolution (A/C.1/52/L.5/Rev.1), which contained the following changes:

(a) In the seventh preambular paragraph, the words "Noting with concern" were replaced with the word "Noting"; the words "continues to be" were replaced with the word "remains"; and the words "and has not declared its intention to do so", at the end of the paragraph, were deleted;

(b) In the eighth preambular paragraph, the words "Alarmed, as a consequence, at" were replaced with the words "Concerned over"; and the words, "this situation" were replaced with the words "the proliferation of nuclear weapons";

(c) In operative paragraph 1, after the words "Calls upon", the word "Israel" was deleted; the word "yet" before the word "party" was deleted; the words "and has not declared its intention to do so", after the words "Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons", were deleted; and the world "score" was replaced with the word "scope";

(d) In operative paragraph 2, after the words "Requests the Secretary-General", the words "to bring the provisions of the present resolution to the particular attention to the Government of Israel, and" were deleted.

7. At the 20th meeting, on 12 November, the representative of Egypt, on behalf of the same sponsors, introduced a further revised draft resolution (A/C.1/52/L.5/Rev.2), which contained the following changes:

(a) The footnote on page 1 relating to the sponsors of the draft resolution, which had read:

"On behalf of the States members of the League of Arab States",

(b) A tenth preambular paragraph was inserted, reading:

"Noting the adoption of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and its signature by one hundred and forty-eight States, including a number of States in the region".

8. At the same meeting, the First Committee adopted the sixth preambular paragraph of the draft resolution A/C.1/52/L.5/Rev.2 by a recorded vote of 137 to 2, with 3 abstentions. The voting was as follows:[1]

In favour: Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against: India, Israel.

Abstaining: Cuba, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea.

9. At the same meeting, the First Committee adopted revised draft resolution A/C.1/52/L.5/Rev.2 as a whole by a recorded vote of 124 to 2, with 17 abstentions (see para. 10). The voting was as follows:

In favour: Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Chile, China,

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[1] The delegation of Tunisia subsequently indicated that it had intended to vote in favour.

Colombia, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against: Israel, United States of America.

Abstaining: Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Canada, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Estonia, India, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Liberia, Marshall Islands, Myanmar, Nepal, Norway, Papua New Guinea, Singapore, Uruguay.

III. RECOMMENDATION OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE

10. The First Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East

The General Assembly,

Bearing in mind its relevant resolutions,

Taking note of the relevant resolutions adopted by the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency, the latest of which is resolution GC(41)RES/25, adopted on 3 October 1997,

Cognizant that the proliferation of nuclear weapons in the region of the Middle East would pose a serious threat to international peace and security,

Mindful of the immediate need to place all nuclear facilities in the region of the Middle East under full-scope safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency,

Recalling the resolution on the Middle East adopted by the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons on 11 May 1995,[2] in which the Conference noted with concern the continued existence in the Middle East of unsafeguarded nuclear facilities, reaffirmed the importance of the early realization of universal adherence to the Treaty,[3] and called upon all States in the Middle East that had not yet done so, without exception, to accede to the Treaty as soon as possible and to place all their nuclear facilities under full-scope International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards,

Recalling also the decision on principles and objectives for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament adopted by the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons on 11 May 1995,[2] in which the Conference urged universal adherence to the Treaty as an urgent priority and called upon all States not yet party to the Treaty to accede to it at the earliest date, in particular those States which operate unsafeguarded nuclear facilities,

Noting that, since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 51/48 of 10 December 1996, Israel remains the only State in the Middle East that has not yet become party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons,

Concerned over the threats posed by the proliferation of nuclear weapons to the security and stability of the region of the Middle East,

Stressing the importance of undertaking confidence-building measures, in particular the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, in order to enhance peace and security in the region and to consolidate the global non-proliferation regime,

Noting the adoption of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty[4] and its signature by one hundred and forty-eight States, including a number of States in the region,

1. Calls upon the only State in the region of the Middle East that is not party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons[3] to accede to the Treaty without further delay, and not to develop, produce, test or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons and to renounce possession of nuclear weapons, and to place all its unsafeguarded nuclear facilities under full-scope International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards as an important confidence-building measure among all States of the region and as a step towards enhancing peace and security;

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[2] See 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, Final Document, Part I (NPT/CONF.1995/32 (Part I)), annex.

[3] United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 729, No. 10485.

[4] See resolution 50/245.

2. Requests the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-third session on the implementation of the present resolution;

3. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-third session the item entitled 'The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East'.